CXO FOCUS

HYBRID APPROACHES STRENGTHEN THE **CIO MANDATE**

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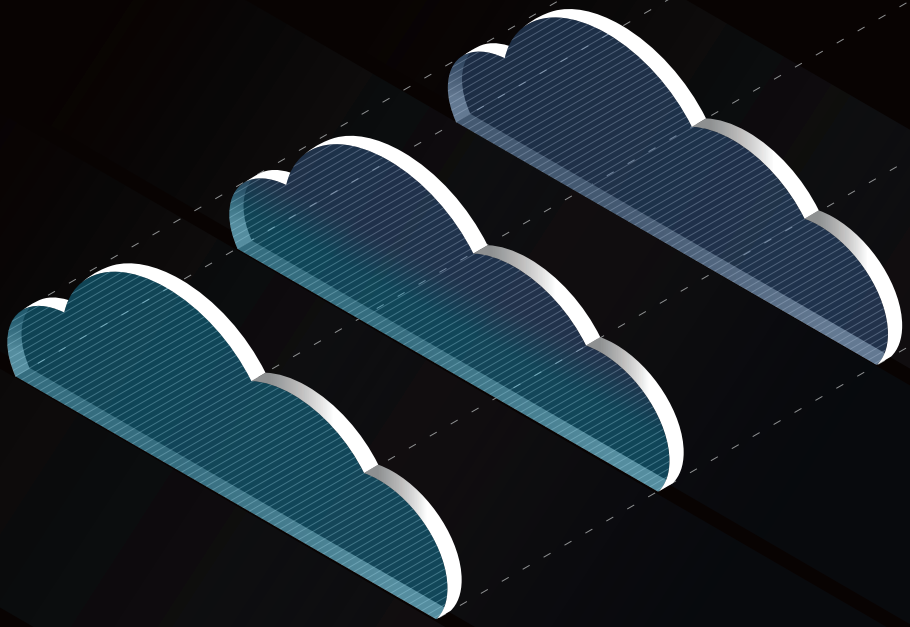
WENDY PFEIFFER



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> Cloud technology providers are guilty of proprietary methods that prevent CIOs achieving their mandate", says Nutanix CIO Wendy Pfeiffer

Everyone knows more about technology than I do at Nutanix, but as CIO of Nutanix, my role is to make this organization more productive and that is the mandate all CIOs must achieve.

The CIO role must be at the helm of organizations as they react and adapt to the next wave of technologies and changes in customer behavior. The Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Index 2018 survey reveals how CIOs are using hybrid cloud solutions to ensure organizations are agile and adaptive. I know from my experience as a Nutanix customer in previous roles and now as the CIO that this is essential.

What strikes me in the findings of the 2018 Enterprise Cloud Index is how the CIO is increasingly taking on new customer focused responsibilities. The Nutanix research demonstrates how CIOs are enabling organizations to reduce the cost of IT and at the same time create increased agility that will enable the organization to be more innovative.

Global research by the likes of analyst houses Forrester and Gartner reveals that boards and CEOs demand increased innovation, and the Nutanix research shows CIOs are putting in place the technological building blocks that organizations can utilize to innovate with.

> If companies are to thrive we need to operate technologies that transform our businesses.

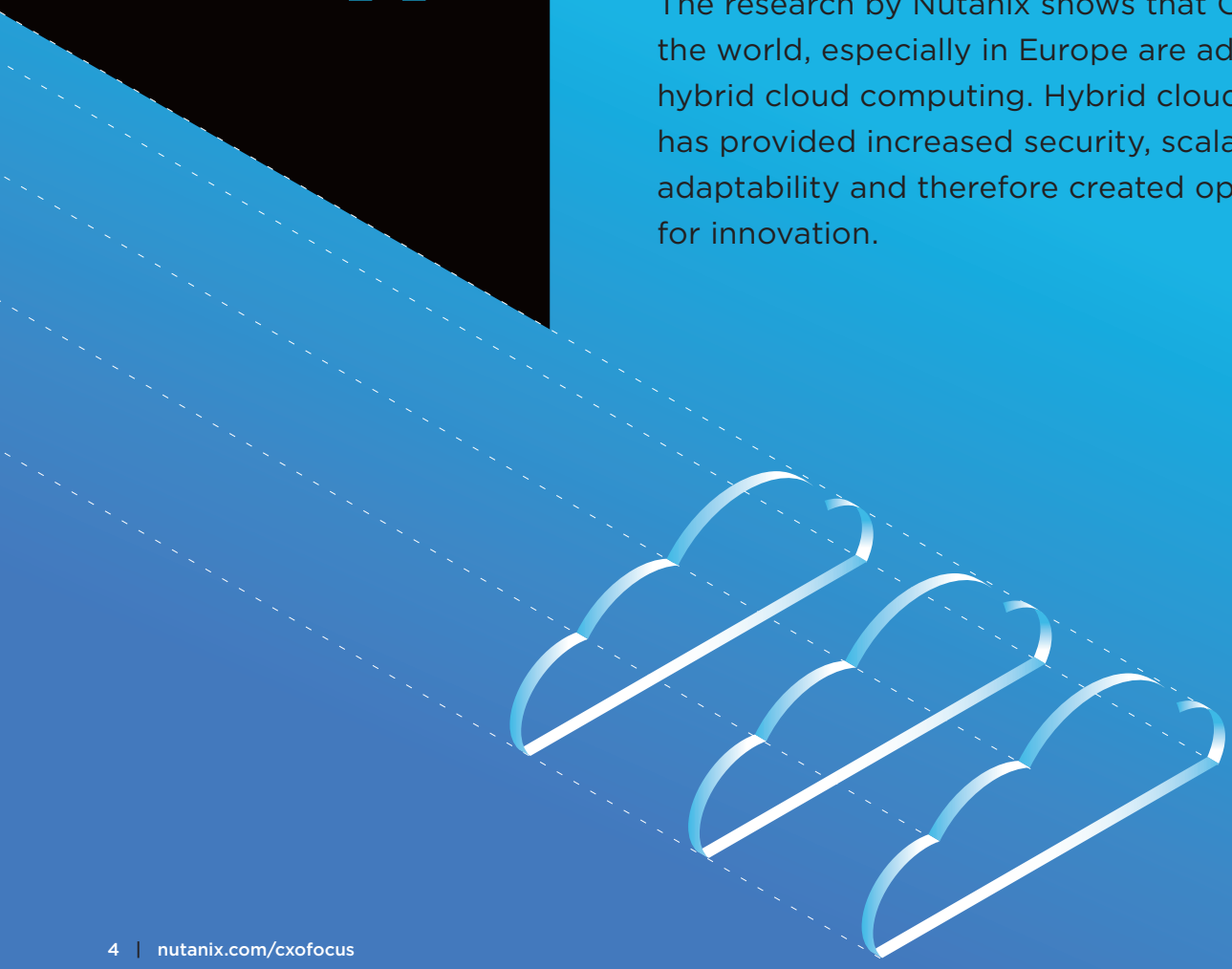
> The research by Nutanix shows that CIOs across the world, especially in Europe are adopting hybrid cloud computing.

THE ROLE OF CLOUD

A key weapon for CIOs and organizations looking to be increasingly innovative is the adoption of cloud computing.

I recently told a gathering of CIO and CTO peers at the London Nutanix .Next event how we as CIOs have the ability to build different clouds for different workloads, giving us the opportunity to use the appropriate cloud for the appropriate task.

The research by Nutanix shows that CIOs across the world, especially in Europe are adopting hybrid cloud computing. Hybrid cloud computing has provided increased security, scalability and adaptability and therefore created opportunities for innovation.



THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

But there remain challenges to the CIO mandate. In my career we have been through numerous rounds of debate that the CIO role will be replaced, that technology is just an organic part of the organization and the need for specialist technologists questioned. But the Nutanix research shows the scale of the challenge CIOs and organizations face to ensure technology is enabling the organization. And speaking as one CIO to another, one of the major challenges is the behavior of cloud technology service providers.

Too many cloud service providers continue the tradition of working with on-premise providers, building proprietary technology. You talk to any major Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) vendor and they'll tell you their customer relationship management (CRM) is a platform and the next thing you know you are consuming elements of technology that are best of breed, but you may also be consuming elements that are not.

As CIOs, we want to consume optimal technology across our portfolio. Sadly, software portability between clouds is near impossible. Moving applications from one cloud provider to another is a drain on our resources, particularly our teams and our budgets. CIOs cannot afford negative resource impacts, because all of us have gargantuan projects, which I like to call Project Rome, because Rome wasn't built in a day. So CIOs and organizations need partners that provide flexibility and freedom.

41% **of companies plan to adopt hybrid cloud architectures in that time period.**

The challenge now is for cloud and technology providers to be offering organizations complete freedom and to be confident in their services. Because as CIOs we are transforming not just IT, but also the way organizations work, so the company is leaner and more efficient, which is the CIO mandate.

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